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**HUDSON RIVER RAIL ROAD.**

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**A P P E A L**

**FOR**

**THE INLAND ROUTE.**

February 3, 1848.

## To the Board of Directors of the Hudson River Rail Road Company:

GENT.—At a large and respectable meeting held at this place, pursuant to public notice, certain resolutions were passed, of which a copy has heretofore been furnished to you and a like copy is now hereto annexed. From those resolutions you will learn, that such meeting earnestly recommended the Interior Route for said Rail Road in preference to the River Route, and appointed us a committee to urge their views upon your consideration.

Thus charged with this duty, we proceed at once to present, in a plain way, the reasons why the Railroad ought to be located from Wappingers Creek to Greenbush, on the Land Route and not on the River route. First, the latter route will cost more than the former. It is certain that any increase of the cost will incur the difficulty of procuring the requisite loan to complete the road, and subject the present stockholders to the risk of a heavy loss on their investment. Even if the cheapest route be adopted, this difficulty is one that may well alarm us, inasmuch as the original estimates so far as they have been tested, are proven to be far short of the fact. The cost of the right of way alone, to Fishkill Landing, it is said, nearly if not quite equals the whole amount set apart for that purpose for the whole line of the road, and it may well be feared, that as like cases of damage will arise along the whole route on the river from Wappingers Creek up to Albany, the right of way there will cost twice as much as it has done thus far. We are told too, that the estimates upon which the cost of the road was originally based, will fall short of the true measurement of dirt and material requisite to form embankments in and along the river, and across the bays, coves, and streams, from the simple fact that but little if any allowance seems to have been made for sinkage. Of course the contractor is paid for the number of cubic yards he deposits, without reference to its remaining permanently where it is put. This item of itself, will in some places more than double the estimated cost, and when we consider here, that no allowance whatever has been made for fascines or other like appliances indispensable to protect all the embankments exposed to the action and wash of the river, we can readily foresee that the cost of the water sections of the route,

will far exceed all estimates formed, and this too without impeaching the reputation of any of our Engineers, as the cost and even the practicability of building a durable railroad in such locations is to a great extent a mere experiment. We cannot fix any amount with a reasonable assurance that it will be sufficient to meet these short-comings of the original estimates, and much less say what extra sum will be required annually for repairs on these water sections, no allowance having been made originally for any but ordinary repairs and expenses on ordinary roads. \$200,000 will be a moderate allowance for mismeasurements, and sinkage, and fascines; and the right of way thus far, has cost at least \$125,000 more than was anticipated, and it will require a capital of at least \$125,000 to defray the extra annual expenses of repairs to the road from Fishkill to New York, resulting from exposure to the wash and the ice of the river. If these views be correct, the road up to Fishkill will cost \$500,000 more than originally estimated, and the recent report of Mr. Clark shows that the former estimates for the Inner route were too low by \$565,065, so that the cheapest route will cost upwards of \$1,000,000 more than was estimated. But if the River Route from Fishkill up be adopted, how much more will this excess then be? It is admitted that the cost of construction made as we may safely presume, on the same erroneous basis as to sinkage, &c. above referred to, will cost an additional sum of \$538,663, add to this \$250,000 for mismeasurements, sinkage and fascines on 83 miles, \$150,000 for extra cost of the right of way, and allow a capital of \$150,000 for extra expenses of repairs on this portion of the river route, and you have an aggregate of \$1,083,663, making the total excess of cost, beyond the original estimates for the whole route, equal to \$2,083,663, and if to this ten per cent. on this sum be added for contingencies and superintendence, as in the other estimates made by the Engineers, the whole amount will be \$2,292,029. This excess will not surprise those who are familiar with such matters, for it is seldom that the actual cost of so great a work varies less from the original estimates, but it may well be asked, from what source can a loan of \$5,292,029 be made on this road?

Second, A railroad on the margin of a river is an experiment, and should be tried no further than necessity may require. No one can say what may be the effect of the constant wash and action of the water and ice, under the influence of tide, and wind, and current, on whatever may be adopted as

the basis of the track along the river and across the bays, coves and streams; nor can any one foretell to what extent, the fear of accidents, in crossing so long a bridge as the river route would in one sense make this road, may divert passengers to the steamboats or other routes; but we can readily conceive that it will become a ready and powerful aid to the runners for rival routes, and that a single accident from the water, would fill the whole community with dread and leave the cars empty. At any rate, common prudence would seem to suggest, in view of the first cost of a river route, the certainty of its extra expenses for annual repairs, and the uncertainty of its being permanent, coupled with the natural fears which may so easily be operated upon adversely to such a route, that a Land Route should be taken wherever it is practicable.

Third, The selection of the river route will cause a *certain* loss of way travel and freight, for the sake of an *uncertain* patronage from the west side of the river. It has been argued and admitted that the Inner route would secure at least three fourths of the way passengers on the east side of the river, and no one can doubt but that it will command an equal proportion of the better class of freights. The item of freight on produce, milk and vegetables for the daily supply of the city markets at either end, has been moderately estimated at \$50,000 per annum. And such calculations have very properly been based upon the fact that this railroad by the Inner route would pass from Poughkeepsie through one of the finest agricultural districts in the State, extending from a line two or three miles from the river near thirty miles back to the State line, and would run through or very near to the villages of Hyde Park, Rhinebeck, Upper Red Hook, Lower Red Hook, Johnstown, Clermont, Hudson and Kinderhook, and enable the large print factories, paper mills and other establishments near Kinderhook and Hudson to pass their goods almost from their doors to the freight cars. Can any one help seeing, that the river route would lose all or nearly all of this freight; and that during the season of navigation it would lose at least 1-4 of the way travel which would otherwise seek the Inner route? This last item of loss on the way travel would of itself exceed \$25,000 per annum, upon the basis of Mr. Jervis' first estimate of the way travel, and deeming a railroad along the river equal to compete for way travel with the steamboats, which well may be doubted. For there, its depots will be located among those who from inter-

est and position, have from the outset been strenuously opposed to the success of the road, and will naturally continue to oppose it and divert its trade by all possible means, trenching as they will then claim it does, upon their own legitimate province and rights, and taking as it must in some cases their own property to get a foot-hold where it can more effectually injure their business. How different would be the feelings of those located on the Inner route, (if that should be selected,) who from the dawn of this great enterprise have been its firmest friends and advocates; and yet if disappointed by the selection of a route never suggested until this late day, how readily could these same persons be induced to co-operate with others against the road.

We have said the patronage from the west side of the river is uncertain, because we know that the character of the business and of the people on that side is such that they never require frequent intercommunication with Albany or New York, except during the summer season, and that with the exception of Catskill, the whole river range of that side would not contribute a car load of passengers or freight in a twelve-month. The fact is, the whole argument in favor of the River Route, except the item of the difference in the running expenses, is one of recent birth, and based solely on doubtful hypotheses, as far removed from science and civil engineering as they may be from the truth. All previous views once so cogent, are now disregarded. As for instance, when it was said the river competition would absorb the way-travel and freight, then it was well and unanswerably argued, that by running inland, the road would tap all the avenues to the river, and appropriate three-fourths or more of the travel and freight from all the villages and country above Poughkeepsie, and that below the Highlands, it would have comparatively but little, if any competition, because from the shallowness of the water on the east side of the river, the line Steamboats touch at no point below this place. Such views are now overlooked, and on the contrary we are entreated to believe that this road should be located where it must invite, nay, compel the utmost competition, and beget wide-spread and bitter hostility without securing a single sure compensating advantage. For we have only to consider, that if the River Route for any cause gets 10 passengers less than the complement allowed for a train by Mr. Jervis, then the Inner Route can be run as cheap as the other and at the same speed, so that the whole argument, based on the difference of the running

expense of the two routes, falls virtually to the ground and becomes a matter of mere theory.

Fourth, Whatever the excess of the cost of the River Route may be over that of the Inland route, such excess will at all times be a dead weight upon the Company and its ability to realize profits. From the foregoing statements no one can resist the conclusion, that the loss of way-travel and of freights from the factories near Kinderhook and Hudson, and upon milk, vegetables, and like articles for the City markets, by the selection of the River Route, would more than counter-balance the estimated difference in the running expenses of the two routes. The case then stands thus; by admission, the River Route will require what is equivalent to an additional outlay of \$600,000, and by our showing above, based on the opinions of practical and judicious men, as well fitted as any other person to form estimates, on the points stated, in relation to such experimental locations, such extra cost will exceed \$1,000,000. There being but 313 running days in the year, this excess of cost will draw about \$223 of interest for each of those days, and it would require about 148 extra through passengers daily to meet this charge; but no one will gravely argue that the River Route can command such, or even any increase of through passengers, over the Inland route, as it will save in time only 5 1-2 minutes, as admitted by the Engineer. The whole burthen, then, of paying this daily tax for interest, is thrown upon those towns bordering on the west side of the river above this place, which may be expected to contribute to the receipts of this road. Estimating the average receipts from passengers from that side at 70 cents each, it will require 318 passengers to or from those towns daily to pay such interest; and every man, woman and child, over ten years of age, in the whole town of Esopus, Kingston, (including Rondout,) Saugerties, Catskill and Athens, if the last census be correct, must make at least two trips on this Railroad every year, to raise an amount sufficient to pay the interest on the extra cost of the River Route. It follows, that unless the amount of patronage from that section of the west side of the river, beyond what the Inland route would get, would be equal to the interest on 1-7 or 1-8, as the case may be, of the whole capital of the Company, the River Route loses its claim even to equality with the Old Route. But who would pledge himself that even 1-4 of this amount, or an average of 70 passengers daily the year round to or from that side, would be secured by the River Route?

Fifth, So great a change of the original route would justly disappoint many of the Stockholders, and might gravely be deemed a violation of their rights. The Inland route has from the outset of this enterprise, been the basis of every effort in behalf of the road, and of all argument, both oral and written, and of all legislation on the subject, and it may safely be said, that if this route had not been deemed irrevocably fixed, in opposition to this River Route, the stock would never have been taken, nor would the Charter itself have ever been obtained.

Sixth, The interests of this Village require the adoption of the inland route. Aside from those who own or are interested in property on or near the river route, we insist that ten men of substance cannot be found here who entertain a contrary opinion on this subject. The inner route will bring the depot and storehouses and other improvements resulting from the road nearest to the present centre of the village, and will cause the least change in its business locations. It will afford our citizens the cheapest and most convenient access to the cars, as it is not half so far from the central part of the village as the river route, and more than three fourths of our population live east of the inland route, and full four fifths live east of the river route. If the inland route be selected, our merchants, grocers, mechanics, and all classes may reasonably expect a large increase of trade and business from Fishkill Landing, Low Point and New Hamburg, Wappingers Creek and Channingville on the south, and a like increase of trade and business from Hyde Park, Rhinebeck and Upper and Lower Red Hook on the north, but the river route would cut us off wholly from these advantages from the north, because it would not pass near the villages named, and to a great extent would deprive us of these advantages from the south, because it would subject persons from that direction to hack hire equal to their railroad fare, or to a long and tiresome walk up and down a considerable hill in reaching and leaving this place, and all practical men know that the slightest circumstances of this kind often have a controlling influence. This Village with a population of over 8000 inhabitants has since 1843, felt itself identified with the success of the road, and hoped to realize from it a perpetual flow of prosperity, and with these views, has from the earliest day exerted her best efforts, and liberally contributed her means in forward the enterprise; and finally, has extended her subscriptions to its stock to an almost ruinous limit in order to secure the benefit

of a charter, for which it had so long labored. These considerations induce our citizens to feel that their interests, though local in part, ought not to be lightly considered, and embolden them to beg that their interests and the great interests of this road may not be exposed to the risk of an ambitious experiment to construct a *River Rail Road*, which if it succeed to the utmost extent of the predictions made, can bring in but little extra gain, and if it fail, must involve the company in helpless bankruptcy.

Dated Poughkeepsie, February 3d, 1848.

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|------------------------|--------------|
| M. J. MYERS,           | } Committee. |
| DAVID B. LENT,         |              |
| STEPHEN B. TROWBRIDGE, |              |

*(Resolutions, &c. above referred to.)*

#### RAILROAD MEETING.

At a meeting of the citizens of the town of Poughkeepsie held at the Village Hall on Thursday evening, January 27th, 1848, JOHN ADRIANCE, Esq. was chosen President, HOWLAND R. SHERMAN and ABRAHAM G. STORM, Vice Presidents, and Josiah I. Underhill, Secretary. The meeting was very numerous, the spacious Hall being crowded to overflowing.

The objects of the meeting were then stated by Isaac Platt, to be to express opinions in reference to the location of the Hudson River Railroad to the directors of the Company, who would soon be called to decide that question.

A committee consisting of Isaac Platt, Charles W. Swift, Harvey Palmer, Caleb Barker, Stephen B. Trowbridge, Charles Pearl, and Edward C. Southwick, was then on motion appointed to retire and report resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting. The committee after consulting, reported the following which, in a fair division were adopted.

*Resolved*, That inasmuch as the citizens of Poughkeepsie took the lead in getting up this noble enterprise of the Hudson River Railroad, in procuring the original survey and a charter for the company, we feel it to be our duty and right to express frankly to the directors our views in reference to the question of location, in which we, as stockholders and citizens, are deeply interested.

*Resolved*, That the best interests of this village require that the Hudson River Railroad be located through it, on the Middle Route, in preference to the River Route.

*Resolved*, That in consideration of the numerous villages and manufacturing places situated on or near the middle route, the vast amount of business and way travel which they will furnish to the



road on account of the facilities given for ready communication with each other and with New York and Albany, we feel that the interests not only of our village but the others on and near the line, will be greatly promoted by the selectinn of said middle route.

*Resolved*, That it having been understood when the stock was subscribed, that the road was to pass through the villages, the selection of the river route will cause a disappointment to many who have earnestly advocated the road on account of the local benefits it would confer.

*Resolved*, That in this view of the subject we respectfully petition the directors to give the middle route as favorable a consideration as in their view the facts and circumstances in the case, and the ends to be secured, will allow, and have perfect confidence in believing they will adopt such a course as will in the end be for the permanent benefit of the company and the public, and give general satisfaction.

*Resolved*, That Mathew J. Myers, David B. Lent, and Stephen B. Trowbridge be a committee to attend a meeting of the directors at their office in New York, and lay before them the proceedings of this meeting, with such other facts as it may be necessary to present to their consideration.

JOHN ADRIANCE, Pres't.

HOWLAND R. SHERMAN, }  
ABRAHAM G. STORM, } Vice Pres'ts.

Josiah I. Underhill, Sec'y.

